

# Whalers, oil firms sign drilling pact

The Alaska Eskimo Whaling Commission recently signed an agreement with members of the oil industry currently involved in drilling and exploration in the Beaufort Sea. The Alaska Eskimo Whaling Commission recently signed an agreement aimed at reducing interference created by oil industry activities with members of the oil industry currently involved in drilling and exploration in the Beaufort Sea.

Commission members said they appreciate work by Sens. Ted Stevens and Frank Murkowski and Rep. Don Young, as well as the North Slope Borough, during negotiation of the agreement.

"It is our hope that the agreement will enable whalers in the fall whaling villages to pursue their customary whaling activities free from interferences inadvertently created by drilling and exploration operations," officials said in a press release.

In entering the agreement, the commission, Kaktovik and Nuiqsut do not waive their right to object to adverse

impacts such as below threshold drilling or noise impacts in circumstances which pose a threat to the migratory patterns of the bowhead whale or to other subsistence resources in the Bering, Beaufort the Chukchi Seas.